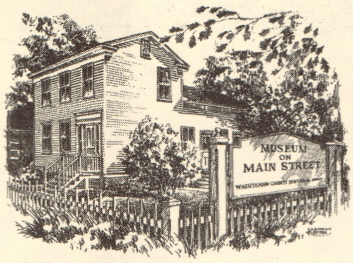

IMPRESSIONS

WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER • FOUNDED 1857 • MAY 2005

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INFORMATION
Published Seven Times A Year
From September-May.

Museum On Main Street
500 N. Main Street at Beakes Street
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Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3336

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Email: wchs-500@ameritech.net
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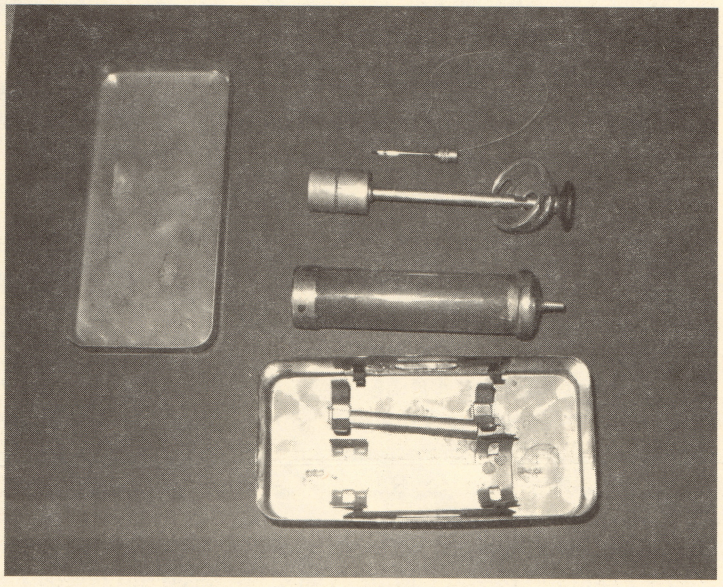
www.washtenawhistory.org

Annual dues: January-December individual, $15; couple/family $25; student or senior (60+) $10; senior couple $19; business/association $50; patron $100.

AMY ROSENBERG

Conservation Of Medical Instruments



15 Syringe, date and donor unknown
Photo: Judith Chrisman

The Washtenaw County Historical Society has an early syringe, which can be seen in the exhibit "Women's Work and Style—1837-1914" from June 18 thru October 19, 2005 at the Museum on Main Street The syringe was invented in 1853, simultaneously, by Charles Pravaz and Alexander Wood. It had a needle fine enough to pierce the skin with a hollow center so that different medications could be carried through it beneath the skin. This syringe consists of a glass barrel, metal plunger and detachable needle. There is a thin wire for cleaning the needle included. Needles of this era were not disposable as they are today. They were cleaned, sharpened and reused. By the 1900s the instrument was usually sterilized either by autoclave or a bactericide solution. A totally glass syringe was invented for Dr. Jonas Salk's polio vaccine in 1954.

The syringe on exhibit is in a box of "silver-like" metal, probably nickel plated, which does not react to a magnet. The inside of the box has been polished, leaving small circular marks. There are metal clasps to hold the syringe parts and the needle. On the surface of the outside of the box are some blackened areas, which are either "tarnish" or corrosion. If they are tarnish, they can be removed with a soft cloth, which has been dipped in a metal polish. Any polish without a coarse polishing grain can be used. One is advised however, that there is a downside to cleaning metal by any method: polish, dip, or wadding.

If the article is silver, a layer of silver will be removed every time it is polished, so the fewer times, the better! One should always wear gloves when handling silver objects, since salts and oils from the skin mark the silver and can leave prints on it. Silver is among the most sensitive materials to the environment.

If you have any questions address them to Amy Rosenberg, Washtenaw County Historical Society wchs-500@ameritech.net. And, by the way, it's been very gratifying to get your emails!

SUSAN CEE WINEBERG • 2005

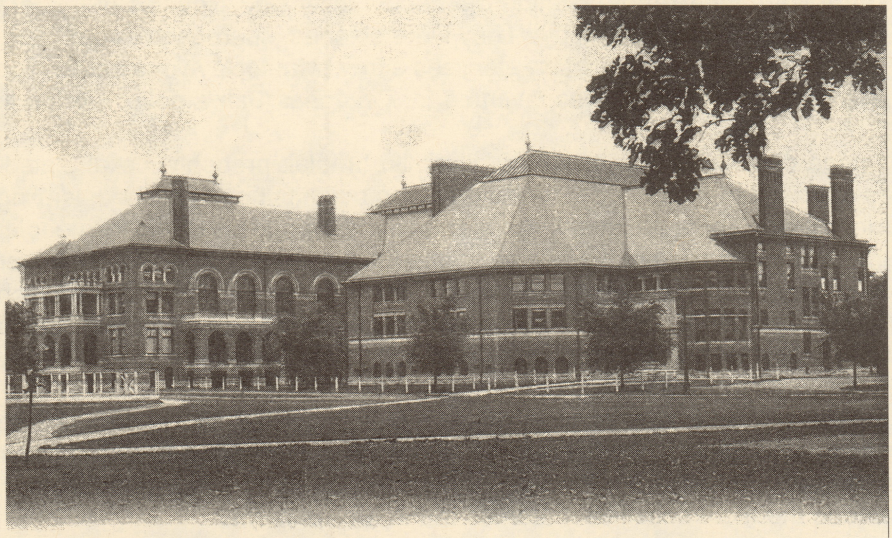
Lost Ann Arbor

I feel I need to start this talk by discussing how I came to write this book. My appreciation of the historic buildings of Ann Arbor developed over a long period of time and involved first researching the house I lived in, then my neighborhood, then my city and then my county. It led to my serving on the Historic District Commission, on numerous neighborhood committees and to being President of the historical society.

Susan Wineberg speaking about her book at Brookhaven Manor.
Photo: Judith Chrisman

In 1974 Ann Arbor celebrated its Sesquicentennial with articles appearing almost weekly about the historic buildings in town. In 1976 the United States celebrated the Bicentennial. I got hooked on local history!

In the midst of all the historic celebrations, the University of Michigan announced its plans to demolish the 1890s Barbour -Waterman Gyms and portions of the Observatory. A movement developed to "Recycle Barbour-Waterman" and I joined-my first venture into historic preservation. Little did I know what paths this would lead me down, and the interesting people I would meet. One was Louisa Pieper, who the next year helped me preserve the original interior doors of 311 E. Ann (the building code required solid core doors for fire safety). Shortly after that, she asked me to be on the Study Committee for the Old Fourth Ward Historic District in 1977. Now I was really hooked.



Barbour-Waterman Gymnasiums, 1904
Photos from Bentley Historical Library Collection and others.

The Study Committee met every other week for almost five years. Ray Detter was one of the committee members. Together with other neighbors we studied the neighborhood and wrote an ordinance based on the successful Old West Side Ordinance. However, our city attorney required every building that we wanted to single out for special treatment to be researched. That task fell to me and it was then that I began amassing what now consists of four filing cabinets of data on the buildings of Ann Arbor, arranged by address.

After the Old Fourth Ward became a historic district in 1983, I served on the Landmarks and Downtown Study Committees. Here I met people like Mary and John Hathaway, natives of Ann Arbor who had worked to preserve the Observatory and other important buildings. I learned about the tragic loss of the old county courthouse in 1954, the loss of the Muehlig house on S. Main Street in 1962, and the loss of the Goodrich House on S. State Street in 1971, a demolition done in the darkness of night to avoid historic review. These demolitions became the driving force behind the preservation movement in Ann Arbor. I also learned about earlier efforts to protect what remained of our architectural legacy. The loss of the Henry Carter Adams house at 1421 Hill Street in 1986 (then known as the Ark Coffeehouse) became the catalyst for expanding the Washtenaw Hill Historic District.

These losses and my work researching the Old Fourth Ward eventually led to my collecting information on all the buildings of Ann Arbor. I attended EMU and received a degree in historic preservation in 1992. *Lost Ann*

Arbor was my master's thesis for this degree. The book is arranged in chapters beginning with the Washtenaw County Courthouse and its immediate neighborhood, and then traces the history of the university and its expansion, the growth of the commercial districts of the city, and the change of East Huron Street from an elite residential neighborhood (somewhat like Washtenaw is today) to a commercial strip full of gas stations. The book is not at all inclusive, however, and I could probably write another book with almost as many photographs! I will try to focus on some of the most dramatic of our architectural heritage.

LIFE REVOLVES AROUND THE COURTHOUSE

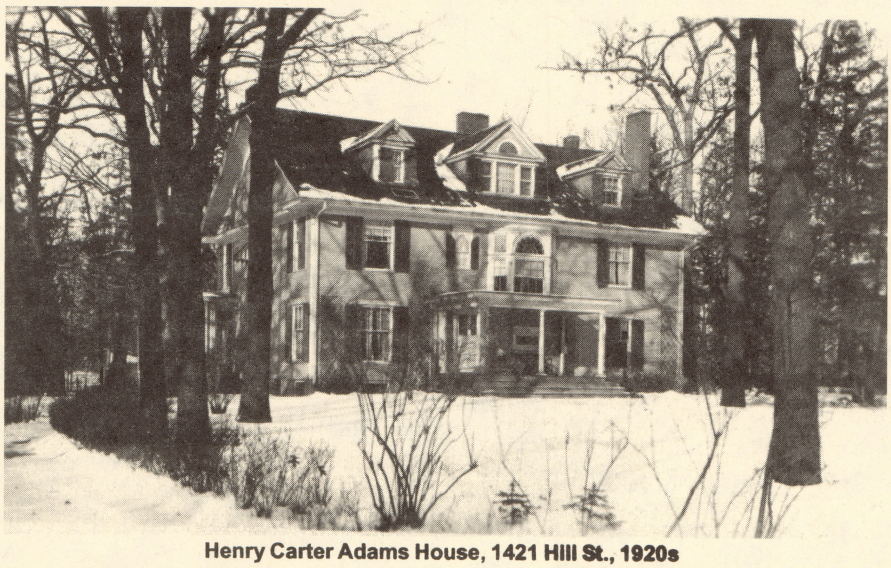
Ann Arbor was founded by John Allen and Elisha Rumsey in 1824. Their original plat included the block Allen donated for a courthouse and one was built by 1834.

Ann Arbors first courthouse, 1864

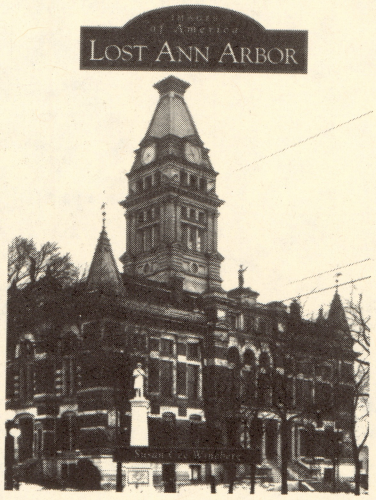
Two years later it was the site of the "Frostbitten Convention" at which Michigan's statehood was approved after delegates agreed to relinquish Toledo for the Upper Peninsula. A state historical marker marks the spot today. The site of the courthouse at Huron and Main also marks ground zero in the city numbering system. So, the courthouse was and is literally the center of town.

By the 1870s, this building was woefully inadequate and in 1878 the second courthouse, complete with clock tower and statues representing justice, was erected This served as the civic center of town for almost 100 years. In my many years on study committees and from talking to local residents, I learned that the loss of the 1878 County Courthouse was considered the most tragic of all the demolitions. I also discovered in reading several years' worth of clippings from the *Ann Arbor News* that no one tried to save this building. World

Muehlig houses, 311 and 315 S. Main St., c. 1910



Henry Carter Adams House, 1421 Hill St., 1920s



Ann Arbors second courthouse, 1916

War II had ended and the pent up demand for new construction, which had been tamped down since the Depression, was too great to withstand. Old was bad and new was good. So, out with the old! Today people find it hard to imagine that no one tried to preserve this building.

In 1954, with the erection of the new building and the loss of the grounds surrounding the courthouse, this sense of the center of town was lost. No longer were there steps from which famous politicians would speak or a greensward on which to assemble.

In the 19th century, the courthouse and post office formed the twin points of city life. Mail was not delivered to your house until the late 1880s and picking up the mail was a social event. There was no city hall so political life centered around the courthouse and the nearby newspaper offices. Also near the courthouse were hotels, business blocks and even the Opera House.

Restaurants and saloons were found in great numbers and eventually businesses expanded along Main Street in both directions from Huron. Some of the more spectacular buildings that once existed were Hangsterfer's, Rettich's Orchestrion Hall on E. Washington and Mummery Drugs. Stately homes could also be found at the far south end of Main, including that of former mayors William S. Maynard and Philip Bach. Tiny houses such as the first Muehlig house could also be found. For the most part, the business blocks were simple affairs, however.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Another engine of growth was the University of Michigan, which was lured to a donated 40-acre parcel at State St and the University streets in

Mason Hall and South College, 1861

1837. In 1841, when the University officially opened, there were five buildings on campus, including four professor's houses and Mason Hall. The campus grew quickly and soon South College was built

The campus really began to boom after the Civil War, when UM briefly was the largest university in the country. In 1871, construction began on University Hall which joined South College with Mason Hall. Its massive presence and dome were the center of campus life for some 50 years. The dome had to be replaced in 1896 and then, in 1950, the whole building was demolished. Other major buildings on campus were the Medical School in the Greek Revival style, the library, the law department, the chemical lab [destroyed by arson in 1981], the engineering lab, and the museum. NONE of these buildings remains today. Only two buildings remain from

Preketes Sugar Bowl, 109 S. Main St., c. 1940

Fire destroys the Economics Building (former Chemical Laboratory), 1981

the 19th century--one of the professor's houses, now the greatly enlarged home for the president of the University, and Tappan Hall built in 1894.

By the 20th century the University was expanding in many directions, which required the destruction of already existing buildings. So, Professor Winchell's octagon house was torn down to build Hill Auditorium in 1909. The building of the Women's League and Burton Tower required the demolition of many houses: the Michigan Union replaced the homes of Professor Cooley and Elihu Pond and, of course, the building of the Law Quad resulted in the demolition (and in one case relocation) of churches, houses and fraternities. Further east along South University, the Hall Greenhouses eventually gave way to open space (the lawn of Martha Cook dorm) and the School of Social Work.

The university's expansion along S. State Street from North University involved the demolition of some very interesting buildings. These ranged from Civil War-era buildings near William Street such as the First Ward School (1862), George Jewett's valet cleaners (an 1850s house no doubt), and a large home demolished for the First Congregational church.

At 444 S. State was the Bible Chair House, originally the 1870 home of Preston B. Rose, Professor of Chemistry. For a brief period of time, a sleek art deco gas station stood next to the Kelsey Museum, at what was then the corner of South State and Jefferson. The street and station disappeared when the current LSA Building was constructed in 1946. At 504 S. State was the home of George S. Morris, Professor of Philosophy and mentor

The old Morris homestead, 504 S. State Street, c. 1900

to John Dewey. It was later a tea room and then the home to WUOM before being demolished in 1946, also for LS&A. Next door, at 512 ,was the Zeta Psi Fraternity, with its turret and crenellated tower, typical of the 1880's buildings further down the street. Next door at 548 and 556 were more turreted houses belonging to James Clements (and boyhood home of William L. Clements after whom the Clements Library is named), and the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity. Except for the site of the Congregational Church, and the two fraternities of Sigma Chi and Alpha Delta Phi, all of these properties now contain University buildings.

Cousins & Hall Florists and Greenhouses, South University Avenue, c. 1900

THE TRANSFORMATION OF HURON STREET

The transformation of Huron Street was one of the more surprising discoveries I made doing this book. I had collected scraps of information and photographs about various buildings but before I wrote my thesis I had never systematically investigated how they were arranged along Huron. The explanation for this rapid shift was the development of the automobile and its rapid acceptance by the American public. Within 25 years, between 1900 and 1925, almost every corner on Huron between Main and Division sported at least one gas station. Soon car-related businesses in addition to gas stations, including used car lots, tire companies and car showrooms, sprouted up and took the place of the elegant houses that once lined the street. Today, only a few houses, including the Silas Douglass house used by the Baptist Church, hint at the grandeur that once was E. Huron Street.

In 1870, if one looked west down Huron Street one could see the dip and then the rise of West Huron as it falls downward at Allen Creek and begins to rise up again across the glacial till. The Ezra Seaman Home is on the left and the Sperry home is on the right, dating to the 1850s and 1830s respectively. Moving west down Huron, one would have encountered the Westminster House at 602 E. Huron, built in the 1840s for Professor Fasquelle, of the Modern Languages Department. Today, the Wesley Foundation occupies this site.

Rev. Gillespie residence, 613 E. Huron Street, 1930s

Across the street was the home of Lewis Risdon, owner of a hardware store on Main Street. Today this is the site of the Campus Inn. Next door, at 613 E. Huron, was a tiny Greek Revival home (dating at least to the 1850s), once used to sell steamship tickets. Today the site is the parking lot of the Campus Inn.

Next door to this site, at 503 E. Huron, was the August Jaycox house, an example of the high-style Second Empire homes built then that are very rare today. Built by a "southern colonel" and liquor distiller, it was a center of entertainment for 20 years. Later remodeled with across the front porches on both floors (probably around 1900) and used as a Baptist Student Center from 1904-1941 and then briefly as the Red Coach Inn, the building was demolished in 1950 for the Herb Estes Ford Used Car dealership. The site today contains Sloan Plaza.

Just next door at 417 E. Huron was the Miles-Sinclair-Rogers-Sheehan House. The house was built in 1842 and enlarged in the 1870s. All owners were successful businessmen. Before it was demolished in the late 1930s, it was measured and drawn by a student of Emil Lorch at the University. In the 1930s, the house became a restaurant called the Haunted Tavern. It was demolished in 1940 for an A & P Grocery store, now very much remodeled and serving as a UM Registrar's Office.

Next door to the Haunted Tavern, at the corner of Division Street, was the romantically onion-domed home of newspaper publisher, John Travis, later to become the Fawcett House specializing in frog legs. It was demolished in 1933 for a gas station, still there today as a take-out pizza joint.

Across the street today are three houses left from this era and Firestone Tire Store, which went up in 1929, replacing the William Breakey house. Katherine S. Groomes, a native of the town and secretary of the Washtenaw Historical Society for 24 years, wrote in her memoirs that:

"When you strolled up E. Huron to the Presbyterian Church you would find Dr. Breakey's home at the SE corner of Division opposite the church, Dr. Fleming Carow's house on the NW corner, Dr. William Herdman's stately red brick home

First Presbyterian Church, Huron and Division Streets, 1893

with its carriage house presided over by a coachmen was west of the church, and then the beautiful little Ladies Library. On the corner of Fifth was the charming home of Dr. Kinne, for many years the Judge of Washtenaw County Circuit Court. The spacious grounds extended to the south to Zion Church. It was surrounded by stately trees and lovely flower beds."

Across the street at the NE corner of Huron and Fifth was the simple home of E.W. Morgan, now the site of Ann Arbor's City Hall, but the house was demolished for a gas station in 1925. Today, the Ann Arbor News occupies the site of the Presbyterian Church, the telephone company is on the site of the library, and Dr. Herdman's stately brick house is the Ann Arbor News' parking lot while Edward Kinne's house site is also a parking lot.

Fifth Avenue was the dividing line between the residential and commercial sections. In the commercial section of Huron, the Allenel Hotel long stood vigil at the corner of Huron and Fourth Avenue, now the site of Courthouse Square Senior Apartments.

So, once again we are back at the center of town. One historical building remains, the Glazier Building from 1906. Also at the corner is the former Ann Arbor Bank, now National City Bank, with its 1960's granite facade still looking quite handsome. Kitty korner is the "One North Main" Building from 1986, also home to another bank and Ralph Beebe, WCHS Program Chair. And at the fourth corner is our 1954 Washtenaw County Courthouse, now looking shabby in its 51st year, but having many elements from the 1950s which are now of interest to those who likemid-century modern design (like its stainless steel and wood interiors and recessed lighting).

I'll end with a picture of a gas station. Does anyone know where this was? It's the corner of Beakes and North Main, where our Museum on Main Street now stands. This photo is from the 1960s. Despite our penchant for demolition, we do manage to 'save' a few buildings sometimes and our museum is a little 1830's gem. It was moved from 1015 Wall Street to 500 N. Main in 1990.

Gas station at Beakes and North Main Streets, site of todays Museum on Main Street

And so it goes. We build them, we take them down, we build them, and we take them down. Sometimes we are lucky enough to have the foresight to preserve some of our better buildings so they can give joy and pleasure to generations to come. But, the sad truth is that America is a progressive country, and we are ambivalent about preservation. Those of us who care can at least document our historic buildings and let them live through our pictures and writings.

Gordon Hall Update

On April 19, 2005 a roundtable discussion was held to reveal common and conflicting interests concerning the Gordon Hall Historic District in Dexter, Michigan. Among the statements read by James Kosteva, representing the University of Michigan were: "The University will not gift the Gordon Hall site to any entity. The University will accept bids on Gordon Hall and the surrounding acreage from September 1, 2005 through November 15, 2005."

This gives the Dexter Area Historical Society and the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission, representatives of non-profit and local government interests respectively, only a few months to develop a plan whereby they not only can bid on the purchase but also be able to fund the restoration and future use of the site as a museum.

For more information contact the Washtenaw County Historic District Commission at the county website www.ewashtenaw.org or by phone at 734-994-2435.

JUDY CHRISMAN

President's Letter

This is the last issue of the newsletter until September. I want to thank all who helped with the newsletter this past year: Pauline Walters for all of her help writing and editing; Amy Rosenberg, Alice Cernigila and Patricia Smith for contributing articles; Debra Royal for putting it all together. I hope we will find an editor this summer to take over some of the job.

We had some feedback on Amy's article about the immigrant sack. Two of our readers, Dietrich W. Roloff, M.D. and Patricia Whitesell, Ph.D., sent an explanation of the last line on the sack. The 'Nro.' is an abbreviation for 'numero' or 'number' and the figure that we could not read is a 1. This would suggest that this was number one of a series of sacks in which Christian Hoffstetter packed his belongings. Indeed, the note that was attached to our bag indicates that 'bags' were donated although we have found only one.

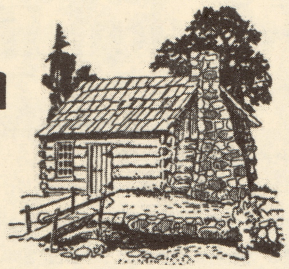
Dr. Roloff also wrote that his atlas shows two villages named Erzingen in Wuerttemberg, Germany and that 'maurer' means bricklayer. Another member indicated that it could mean bricklayer, stone mason or plasterer.

A genealogical search indicates that the donor of the bag, Rueben Hoffstetter, was born in Ann Arbor in 1880 and was the grandson of Christian. Christian was born about 1820 in Wuerttemberg, his occupation was stone mason, he had three sons, and in 1880 he lived at 583 W. Liberty, Ann Arbor. The U.S. Census lists the oldest son, Christian II, as a brick mason in 1870. The youngest son, Adolphus, was born in Michigan and is listed in the 1880 census as a brick mason living at 624 W. Jefferson. Middle son Jacob, born in Wuerttemberg in 1849 (the year Christian immigrated) was Rueben's father. Jacob was a saloon keeper and lived at 72 S. Main. Rueben became a bond salesman.

We appreciate the feedback we get on our newsletter articles. We want to thank those who take the time to "fill in the blanks" in our records. We hope to see you all at our summer exhibit and in the fall at our Sunday meetings. Ralph Beebe, Program Chairman, is putting together an interesting series of lectures for next season.

SUNDAY • JUNE 26, 2005

Celebrate Michigan Log Cabin Day



Ann Arbor's historic Cobblestone Farm Museum
2781 Packard Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48108 • 734/994-2928
Sunday, June 26, 2005 • Noon to 3 p.m.

Tour the c.1835 Willis Log Cabin moved to this site in 1981 and the historic properties. There will be **exhibits** and **Hands-on activities** such as butter churning, corn grinding, laundry, wool carding, rope bed tightening, etc and the **gift shop** will be open.

At 1:30 p.m. there will be a **slide presentation** by Ann Arbor historian, **Wystan Stevens**. Admission: $2 for children 4+ and adults, $8 for families.

Cobblestone Farm's regular open hours for 2005 are 10 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.: on the 4th Saturday of each month May through September (May 28, June 25, July 23, August 27, September 24) Admission for regular tours is $2 adults; $1.50 ages 4-17; $6 family.

Huron River Day 2005

25th Anniversary Celebration

Gallup Park & Parker Mill
Sunday July 10

Since 1980, the year of the first Huron River Day, 400 billion cubic feet (3 trillion gallons) of water have flowed via the Huron River into Lake Erie and eventually into the Atlantic Ocean. Every year we celebrate this remarkable natural phenomenon on the first Sunday after the Fourth of July, our national holiday. This year is the 25th anniversary of the first Huron River Day. Our celebration will be traditional, with food, music, educational exhibits and fun events for the whole family. Because it is the 25th anniversary, this year's event will feature a substantially increased emphasis on the historical component. Images of the river and people and events related to it will be posted at Gallup Park. All are invited to view these images and memorabilia to become more familiar with the way the Huron River has dramatically affected the lives of Washtenaw County residents. We hope to see you there.

Huron River Day
Coordinating Committee

Celebrate Key Anniversaries

135th Anniversary Celebration of the Saline Railroad Depot
and
10th Anniversary of the Depot Museum
402 N. Ann Arbor St., Saline
734-994-0442

Saturday, July 23, 2005
11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Family fun will include velocipede rides, trolley rides to the sites of various 19th century businesses around the depot complex, music, railroad related gifts for sale, and food for purchase. For a nominal fee, an official U.S. Post Office cancel will be applied to cacheted envelopes for stamp collectors and those wanting an inexpensive souvenir of the day. A post office employee will be on hand to hand stamp mail with our specially designed cancel that features our caboose.

Admission is free; donations always gratefully accepted.

ALICE CERNIGLIA

Women's Work & Style 1837-1914

In early America the work of women was usually in the role of wife. She worked alongside her husband, running a household, farm or plantation. Widows and the wives of men off-to-war or traveling on business often ran them alone. Cooking for the household took a major part of a woman's time. Making garments-spinning yarn and weaving cloth-also took much time. After the Revolution and into the early 19th century, higher expectations for educating the children often fell to the mother.

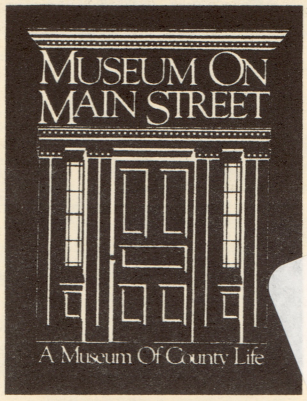
Other women worked as servants or slaves. Unmarried women, divorcees or those married without property, might work in another household, helping with chores of the wife or substituting for the wife if there was not one in the family. Widows or widowers tended to remarry quickly.

Many women, especially but not only widows, owned businesses. Women worked as apothecaries, barbers, blacksmiths, sextons, printers, tavern keepers and midwives.

In the 1840s and 1850s, as the Industrial Revolution and factory labor took hold in the United States, more women worked outside the home. By 1840, ten percent of women held jobs outside the home. Ten years later, this had risen to fifteen percent. Factory owners hired women and children because they could pay lower wages than to men.

For this exhibition, we focus on those exceptional women in Washtenaw County who were employed in professions where women were not the norm. Among the professions to be explored are educators at the University of Michigan, Michigan Normal School, and in the public and private sector; saloon keeper, Mrs. Catherine Schumacher; bakers, Mrs. William Caspary and Mrs. Hangsterfer; physicians, Eliza Mosher, Sophia Hartley, and Jeanne B. Solis, who was one of the founders of Mercywood Hospital; artist, Katie Rogers; lawyers, Mary Foster, Helen McAndrew; as well as businesswomen, Olivia B. Hall, Emma Hall, Bertha Muehlig, Lucretia Gillette. The exhibit will give you an aspect of the life of working women in a time when working women went unheralded.

The research for this exhibit was primarily done by our new volunteer, Susan Nenadic. We are particularly looking for a woman's serge gym suit designed by Dr. Mosher and information about the Walker family and the Hangsterfers. If you have any information about working women of this era or have artifacts you can loan, please contact Alice Cerniglia at 734-662-9092



WASHTENAW COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Post Office Box 3336
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106-3336

OPEN HOUSE: Sunday, June 19 Noon – 5 PM
Museum on Main Street 500 N Main, Beakes/E Kingsley, AA
Update: **GORDON HALL** – see p.7
LOST ANN ARBOR by Susan Cee Wineberg
on sale at Museum on Main Street

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Ann Arbor, MI
Permit No. 96

SUNDAY • 12-4 PM
OPEN HOUSE • JUNE 19, 2005
"WOMEN OF WASHTENAW COUNTY WORK & STYLE 1837-1917"
2 PM • SUSAN NENADIC
MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET
500 N. MAIN ST • ANN ARBOR

MEMBER 2005
NANCY KROHN
905 ROBIN RD
ANN ARBOR MI 48103-3008

Upcoming Events

Sunday • June 19	Open House and lecture Museum on Main Street, Ann Arbor
Sunday • June 26	Log Cabin Days, Cobblestone Farm
Friday • July 8	Rolling Sculpture, Ann Arbor
Sunday • July 10	Huron River Days, Gallup Park
Wednesday-Saturday • July 20-23	Ann Arbor Art Fair
Saturday • July 23	Celebration at Saline Depot
Friday-Saturday • August 12-13	Dexter Daze
Friday-Sunday • August 19-21	Ypsilanti Heritage Festival
Saturday • August 27	Fire Truck Muster Ypsilanti Riverside Park
Sunday • September 18	Old West Side Home Tours Ann Arbor
Saturday • September 24	Wander Washtenaw Webster Fall Festival
Sept 29-October 16	Ypsilanti Historical Quilt Show at Museum
Saturday • October 1	Antique Truck Show Ypsilanti Riverside Park

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Washtenaw County Historical Society is to foster interest in and to elucidate the history of Washtenaw County from the time of the original inhabitants to the present. Its mission shall be to carry out the mandate as stated through the preservation and presentation of artifacts and information by exhibit, assembly, and publication. And to teach, especially our youth, the facts, value and the uses of Washtenaw County history through exhibits in museums and classrooms, classes, tours to historical places, and other educational activities.